

First, a return to righteousness. An understanding of who we are and what God expects us to become will prompt us to pray—as individuals and as families. Such a return reveals the constant truth: “Wickedness never was happiness” (Al. 41:10). Let not the evil one dissuade. We can yet be guided by that still small voice—unerring in its direction and allpowerful in its influence.

Second, a quest for the good life. I speak not of the fun life, the sophisticated life, the popular life. Rather, I urge each to seek eternal life—life everlasting with mother, father, brothers, sisters, husband, wife, sons, and daughters, forever and forever together.

Third, a pledge to wage and win the war against pernicious permissiveness. As we encounter that evil carrier, the pornography beetle, let our battle standard and that of our communities be taken from that famous ensign of early America, “Don’t tread on me” (John Bartlett, *Familiar Quotations*, p. 1090).

Let us join in the fervent declaration of Joshua: ‘Choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as

for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Josh. 24:15). Let our hearts be pure. Let our lives be clean. Let our voices be heard. Let our actions be felt.

Then the beetle of pornography will be halted in its deadly course. Pernicious permissiveness will have met its match. And we, with Joshua, will safely cross over Jordan into the promised land—even to eternal life in the celestial kingdom of our God.

That we may do so is my sincere prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Marion G. Romney

Elder Thomas S. Monson, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Adney Y. Komtsu, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and Executive Administrator of the Hawaii-Pacific Isles area.

He will be followed by Elder Richard G. Scott, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and Executive Administrator of the Mexico North area.

## Elder Adney Y. Komatsu

### After tribulation come blessings

Thirteen years ago, as a mission president in Japan, I received a call from a young serviceman’s wife who needed to see me. Her husband, an air force pilot, had just been shot down and had died in combat over Vietnam. As she was ushered into my office, I saw her hugging a large picture. We sat down to talk and she showed me the picture of her husband, a handsome pilot with his helmet in his hands, standing proudly beside his jet fighter plane.

She sobbingly said how much she loved him and couldn’t believe that he was gone. She continued by

saying that she was a convert of nearly two years. She had met her husband while in college, and it was he who had introduced her to the gospel. Later she was baptized, and they were sealed in the temple for time and all eternity.

Her life with him had been beautiful and everything a person could ask for. She had looked toward the future with great joy and anticipation. But now, all too soon, it had come to a sudden, crashing halt.

She had a great adjustment to make in her life and wanted assurance that all would be well. What would your counsel be to her?

The Lord has said:

"For verily I say unto you, blessed is he that keepeth my commandments, whether in life or in death; and he that is faithful in tribulation, the reward of the same is greater in the kingdom of heaven.

"Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your God concerning those things which shall . . . follow after much tribulation.

"For after much tribulation come the blessings" (D&C 58:2-4).

### **We gain experience through adversity**

As we pass through this mortal probation, we accrue many experiences. It is in these experiences that we are often beset with problems, challenges, adversities, afflictions, trials, and tribulations. The Lord said to the Prophet Joseph Smith, after a period of great afflictions, "Know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good" (D&C 122:7).

The early members and leaders of the Church suffered many afflictions, challenges, and trials. Many gave their very lives for their belief and testimony of the gospel. In the long journey over the pioneer trails, many children and adults were buried in graves along the way.

We have the promise of the Lord who said:

"And it shall come to pass that those that die in me shall not taste of death, for it shall be sweet unto them;

"And they that die not in me, wo unto them, for their death is bitter.

"Thou shalt live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die, and more especially for those that have not hope of a glorious resurrection" (D&C 42:46-47, 45).

### **Gospel knowledge gives peace**

Recently I attended a funeral service for a faithful member of the Church on the remote island of Vava'u in Tonga. This good brother had been loved by the people of his village, and he had the respect of nonmembers as well as Church members.

As the funeral procession left his home and proceeded to the grave site, the whole village followed and finally gathered on a knoll overlooking a peaceful bay. The people clustered around the grave site while the bishop and those participating stood facing the family. I couldn't help but notice that while many were overcome with sadness and wept during the service, the widow sat peacefully by her beloved husband.

I knew that she had the knowledge of the resurrection and plan of salvation. I later learned that she and her husband had journeyed to the New Zealand Temple and had been sealed together for time and all eternity. In her life, this was not a total calamity but rather a part of God's plan. There was about her an air of peace and appreciation for the gospel.

President Kimball stated: "The Lord has not promised us freedom from adversity or affliction. Instead, he has given us the avenue of communication known as prayer, whereby we might humble ourselves and seek his help and divine guidance, so that we could establish a house of prayer."

President Kimball also said: "They who reach down into the depths of life where, in the stillness, the voice of God has been heard, have the stabilizing power which carries them poised and serene through the hurricane of difficulties" (ENSIGN, May 1979, p. 6).

President Harold B. Lee stated in general conference in 1965: "Just

as a flood-lighted temple is more beautiful in a severe storm or in a heavy fog, so the gospel of Jesus Christ is more glorious in times of inward storm and of personal sorrow and tormenting conflict" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1965, p. 16).

### Example of stake president

May I share another experience with you? A few years ago in Japan, a stake was being organized from a mission district. In the course of an interview, the district president stated that he would shortly be moving to another city where he had accepted a promotion with his company to become the manager of their largest branch. But the Lord wanted this man to serve as the new stake president. He was called before the General Authority who inquired whether his superiors would reconsider the promotion and allow him to remain in the city where he might be able to serve his church in this very important position.

Immediately the district president stated that he had given his word to his superiors who had already made changes in all of the branches in the company, except in the branch that he was to supervise. He had asked for a delay of his assignment until after the organization of the stake.

Notwithstanding this explanation, the General Authority asked the district president if he would be kind enough to contact his superiors with this request and then notify him of the results.

Late that night I received a call from the district president. His employer had been understandably dismayed by his request to remain in the city and reconsider the promotion. The company president asked him to seriously think again about his request and then to call him back in five minutes. In that short interval of time, he would be forced

to make a decision that would affect the rest of his life. At that moment he called to ask my advice.

My reply to him was that the Lord had sent one of his Apostles to organize a stake of Zion in Japan. If he had to give his answer to the Lord himself, would it be any different? He thanked me, then called his employer.

Early the next morning, he came to the mission home and was officially called as the new stake president. When the General Authority inquired about his status with the company, the district president responded that his promotion was canceled and that he would have to accept whatever they decided to give him.

Before he left, the General Authority blessed this man and stated that although he would go through a period of trials and tribulations at work, the time would come when he would be called upon by his employer to help make great and important decisions for his company, because he had made a decision to serve the Lord rather than to accept personal gain.

A few years later, this man—still a stake president—became the assistant to the president of his company, fulfilling the promise made by an Apostle of the Lord. How great is our reward as we faithfully endure our afflictions and sufferings of this life!

We are promised, as the Prophet Joseph was promised, "Thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment;

"And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes" (D&C 121:7-8).

### Suffering part of our education

Orson F. Whitney said: "No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of

such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God . . . and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we come here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father and Mother in heaven" (cited in Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1972, p. 98).

President Kimball said: "Suffering can make saints of people as they learn patience, long-suffering, and self-mastery. The sufferings of our Savior were part of his education.

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:8-9.)" (*Faith Precedes the Miracle*, p. 98).

May we endure our trials and sufferings well. May we look to the Lord with faith in his righteous judgment is my prayer, and I ask it humbly in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

#### President Marion G. Romney

Elder Adney Y. Komatsu, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and Executive Administrator of the Hawaii-Pacific Isles area, has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Richard G. Scott, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy and Executive Administrator of the Mexico North area.

He will be followed by Elder O. Leslie Stone, also a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

## Elder Richard G. Scott

What would you think of a man who would chop up a beautiful grand piano to make firewood or use an expensive hand calculator to pry open a desk drawer? Such destructive use of valuable resources is unthinkable, yet there are so many in the world today who more tragically misuse the priceless resources of mind and body and spirit.

### Happiness

If every day seems devoid of real satisfaction and meaning, if the things you want most in life seem unobtainable, or if in despair you have turned to the wrong things in an attempt to find happiness and companionship, we have for you a message of hope and assurance. Since it is based on religious

principles that you at present may not fully understand, please do not reject it, for with all the conviction of my soul I know that it will bring you what you most desire.

The Lord inspired a prophet to declare, "Men are, that they might have joy" (2 Ne. 2:25), that is, happiness now and forever. But you say, "How can you find happiness? So many give advice, but often it is confusing and expressed in terms and concepts I don't understand."

God knew that his children would face this challenge, so he provided an unfailing way to recognize his true plan for happiness.

### The Spirit of Christ

I will illustrate that way by a simple example. Let this box repre-